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A Few WORDS

by way of QUERY;

TO THE

TEACHERS, and *PROFESSORS*,

CALLED

PRESBYTERIANS,

And

INDEPENDENTS.

WITH

A Word *of* PROPHESIE, *in* Verse.

ALSO

A Word *of* Exhortation *and* Warning *of love to them to haste out of* Babylon, *the Mystery of* Iniquity, *into* SION, *the City of Holinesse*:

With A Word *at last to those that were* PERSECUTORS.

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Written by one that desires the good of all men, and the Glory of God and his Truth: JOHN WHITHOWSE.

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A FEW WORDS

A few Words by way of Querie, *to the Teachers and Professors, called Presbyterians and* Independents, &c.

WHat was the ground of your Zeal, which carried you on in the Years lately past, to preach and professe, as you then did, seeing now the carnal sword is taken from you, it is greatly fallen in you, and you are fallen from that Zealousnesse that then was with you?

Whether had you ever any command from God, the Higher Power, for the keeping of your Lectures, and other of your Assemblings your selves together, to preach and pray to God, as you have done? seeing now man commands the contrary, you let them down.

Whether was your Ministers, and your Order of Ministring, ordained by the power of God, seeing that by the power of man you are put to silence; and yet not by force and violence onely, but by words of command?

But if you say, We are put out of our Places and Churches, and cannot do as we have done:

Then I Querie, Is not another Place as lawful as that? seeing Christ saith, *Where soever two or three are gathered together in my Name, there will I be in the midst of them?* And also the Ministers of Christ, *when they were put out of the Temple and Synagogues, feared not to preach the Gospel, of which they were made Ministers*, though they were commanded of men to the contrary; yet they met together in Houses, and other Places, as the Scriptures testifie.

And have you not Houses that might serve for that purpose? And if God ever set you on in his work, why do you not go on therein? not fearing vain man, *who can but kill the body*: and take your Company that have owned you and your Ministry, and have denyed the Common-Prayer long ago; and separate your selves therefrom; and so beare a Testimony by your practice publickly against it. Or else, may it not be said justly, That you are an hypocritical Company of Time-servers, who in the Time

of Liberty preached, and professed against it; but now, for fear of Man, and what he may do, conforme thereunto?

Whether did *Daniel* well or ill, and *the Three Children* also, in disobeying those Kings Lawes, in their dayes? and bearing a Testimony, as Living Witnesses for the Lord, although *Daniel* was but one man, to stand against a King and Nations Decree: and likewise the other, but Three against the Decree of the mightiest King in all the Earth at that time; who thought no God could deliver out of his hand? And had *Daniel* ceased praying openly, as many of you have done, and Preaching also: and the other Three conformed to that worship, as was then commanded, as many of you have done now, to a Worship of the like nature; which is to say contrary to God: then had they not, I say, betrayed their God? O then, consider what you have done, and are a doing: And also, How had the Everlasting Gospel been published, if the Apostles had been of your spirit? when the *Chief Rulers* of *Jerusalem charged them to speak no more in the Name of Jesus*. And seeing you professe your selves to be Ministers and Servants of him; How is it that your actions are so quite contrary to the Faithfull Ones before mentioned, now you are tryed in like manner as they were! Upon which ground, may it not be concluded by all people, That you have had but the outside shew, or Covering of the Ministers and Servants of Christ, and have wanted the inside nature all this while? *Dan.* 10 3,16. *Acts* 5.28,29.

Some build on the waters, and some build on the sand;
But nought but what's o'th rock in this day will stand;
For the waters will roul and toss, and the winds will blow;
And what's not grounded on the rock, the storm will overthrow;
For now the sheeps covering shall be ript off the wolf;
And all deceit shall be cast down into hells dark gulph,
Whence never more it shall arise, the simple to deceive;
For from all that hath made them a prize, God will them bereave:
And they shall see, who is i'th form, but wants the power; Eze. 34. Read
For they shall not stand in his trying hour, the whole Chap.
Which is come, and coming on all professions them to try,
Whether they will suffer for their Religion, or to escape, it deny?

The *false Church* stands upon *the sand*, and *waters*, which are *peoples, multitudes,*

multitudes, Nations, and tongues, Rev.17.15, which are like the tossing Sea; *Isa.57.20.* But in the New Creation there shall be no more Sea, *Rev. 21. 1.* And yet the Kings of the earth shall bring their Glory into the Holy City new *Jerusalem* therein, *ver.24.* He that reads, let him understand; for verily the time's at hand.

TO such as plead it lawfull and good to conforme to the *Common-prayer*, and hear the Teachers thereof, I querie thus; Whether do you believe, that it is the Spirit of God that leads and guides them to read and performe that Forme of worship which to the *Common-prayer* belongeth? which if you believe not, then how dare you joyn with them, seeing it is said, *They that are not led by the Spirit of Christ, are none of his?* 1 Rom. 8.9. *And they that are not for us, are against us,* saith Christ, *Luke* 9.50.

Ah! How dare you that professe to love Christ, joyn with those that are against him, who saith, *My sheep hear my voyce, and a strangers voice will they not follow?* John 10.5. Then if you joyn with, and follow those which you are convinced speak not by his Spirit; do you not manifest your selves to be none of his Sheep? and if not his spirit, then what spirit, then what spirit is it? seeing there is but the Spirit of God, and the spirit of the Devil, that doth lead or guide the spirits of men: O consider, if you follow these, do you not erre from the Spirit of God, according to your own belief or Profession in times past?

But if you say, You joyn not with them though you hear them, then I querie; What do you amongst them? What doth the Spirit of God lead you to hear and conform with those that speak by another spirit? or do you think to benefit any thing by them towards God, that you believe are contrary to God? and if contrary to God, then they are of the Wicked one; and then the best of their Words and Works are sin; for it is said, *The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord,* Prov.15.8,21,27. yea, and the plowing of them is sin: And then do you not sin in joyning with, or hearing them in their sin, which is the fruit of darknesse? And in so doing do you not erre from the Scripture? which you have professed your Rule, which saith, *Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but reprove them,* Eph.5.11.

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and come out from amongst them, *and touch not the unclean thing*, saith the Lord. 2 *Cor.* 6.17. *and I will receive you.*

But if some of the Common-prayer Readers do preach sometimes according to the form or manner of your Teachers which you own, and you think you may lawfully hear them in that:

Then I querie, Whether they can serve two Masters in an hours time? or do the Devils work in one half hour, and Gods in another? Or be the Ministers of Antichrist, and of Christ, both in one hour? Or whether are they not of that spirit, as those were, which the Apostle speaks of, who with good words and fair Speeches deceive the heart of the simple?——————or may they not have *a Form of the words of Godliness, and yet deny, and be enemies to the power thereof.* And do you not deny the Apostles Exhortation in the Scripture, your professed Rule, except you deny and turn away from them? 2 *Tim.* 3.5.

These things are not written to accuse you, nor to condemn any thing that is good in you; but rather to provoke you to be zealous in it, and for it: Also to put you in minde, to consider, That much of your zeal in times past sprung not from the power of God, but from your own wills and strength; which is manifested by the falling of it: Now the power and arm of flesh is fallen from you, that which is of men will come to nought: But that which is of God, Men cannot overthrow, *Acts* 5.38.39.

So every one that hath any sincere desires in you after God, or tenderness of conscience in you in this day of tryal, take heed how you conform or bow to any thing contrary to that tender Principle in you: for if you do, it will murder those desires, and also deaden and cool the true zeal that is in you; which will not be the way for you to increase, but decrease to God: Therefore be revived in the true zeal of God, which moves in you, against every appearance of evil; and be zealous for *Sion* the City of Holiness, the habitation of God: and come out of *Babylon*, the Mystery of Iniquity, *and abomination of the Earth*, and partake not of her sin; for if you do, you must taste of her Plagues; the Lord God will not spare you.

For he will burn her walls, towers, & buildings, both wood, stubble, & stones, and against the walls will he dash & break all her childrens bones, Je.51.58

And

And if then in or under her skirts you be found;
Then, with his terrible dart he'l smite you to the ground:
Therefore out of her coasts see that you haste and flye; Jerem. 51.45.
For all that in her live and dwel, a perpetual death must die: ver. 57,39.
But Sion shall stand safely, for in her's the corner stone, Isa. 28.16.
And blest shall that man be, that lays on it his foundation. 61.9
So all out of the darknesse come, turn in unto the light, John 12 35,36.
For without it you cannot see to lay your building right.
So the Lord direct all the true desires
After his life, through the wilderneſſe; and all the cryers
Therein, whose faces are turned towards Sion, and make
All the hard things easie before them, and every crooked way streight;
That into Sions coasts they may come, where none are croſt, but blest;
And a habitation they may know, even in the Land of reſt,
Wherein the Sabboth day is kept, which never shall have end:
In these desires my soul doth reſt, in which I am your friend.

A word to those that were Persecutors *in the time of their prosperity.*

Remember you the days of your prosperity, how twas said oft to you then,
That what you measured to others should be measured to you again.
But then you stopt your eares, hardened your hearts, and would neither hear nor see:
But now a day of persecution on you is come, in which it fulfilled shall be:
For many by you were cast into prison, their goods also destroyd;
Of Justice, Equity, Mercy, or Law, by you they were denyd:
Now thus in this day to you done, in this day it will be;
Unleſſe you will turn to your vomit again, and owne Idolatry.

Remember *little Joseph was hated and persecuted of his Brethren:* what was the reason? Because their Father lov'd him best, therefore they grudged: also, because the Lord shewed more to him then to them; for which they hated him the more, *Gen.* 37.5. and scorned at him, *v.* 19. and made a Conspiracy against him to destroy him: yet *the Lord was with him*, and blest him, and brought them down to bow before him; and yet notwithstanding all this which they

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did to him, he loved them freely, & his bowels yearned towards them; and he gladly received them in the time of their distresse. O Remember and consider this, and be not envious against *little Joseph*, whose love and bowels towards you yearneth, which is, and shall be manifested unto you: For a famine is entered into your land, and scarcity amongst your dwellings; But *Josephs* habitation is in a fruitfull Land; for his Store-houses are full, yea, and his fatts overflow: Therefore be not stiff in your mindes, neither think it a disgrace to receive at his hand; for you must bow, the Lord hath said it, else you must perish in this dry and gloomy day, wherein all the springs and rivers, but what comes from the invisible, will dry away; at which *Joseph* shall drink, and be kept alive, which as the Willows of the Brook shall make his soul to thrive:

Therefore come in the simple love, take Joseph *by the hand;*
And he will lead you to the well, which doth wide open stand:
Out of which the Streams of Life do runne freely:
Where all may freely drink, for none needs to buy, Isa. 55. 1.

Praises everlasting, Halelujah to Sion's *King;*
For out of him the living Rock,
the water pure doth spring,
Which doth refresh the weary,
and make glad the poor:
Therefore let him have the honour,
now, and for evermore.

He that hath an eare to hear, let him hear, and fear. For he that loves father, or mother, wife or children, houses or land, gold or silver, life or liberty or any thing else better then the Kingdom of God, in that state he must never come there. Now, he that conformes to Idolatry for fear of losing these things, the same is he that loys them better than the Kingdome of God. *The* 1 Epist. of *John*, 2, 15, 16, 17. *Jam.* 4. 4.

This is the hard Saying, that causeth the Earthly Minde to draw back.

John Whithouse.

Given from my hand the 19 *day of the* 8 Month, 1662.

THE END.